

Module Description, Reading List and Essay Questions**TOPICS IN ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY (PY430-5-SP) (15 credits) Spring Term only****Wayne Martin Office No. 6.124**

This is an optional module offered to philosophy undergraduates in their second year. It is open to outside option students and also third/final year students.

The School would like to encourage any student with a disability or health issue that needs to be taken into account to contact the Student Support Office, either by email on disab@essex.ac.uk, or by telephoning internal ext. 2365 or 3444.

Assessment

Assessment for undergraduates is by means of two short essays (1,000-2,000 words each), equally weighted, and a two-hour examination at the end of the year. The final coursework mark and the examination mark each counts for 50% of the mark for the module.

Students who submit both essays by the deadline and receive a minimum mark of 35 for each essay, may if they wish submit a third (optional) essay. If an optional essay is submitted the best two essay marks will count towards the final coursework mark.

The University operates a course deadline policy for the late submission of coursework. In other words a mark of zero will be recorded for any piece of coursework submitted after the published deadline. For further information and essay deadlines please see the list of essay questions and the School's 'Undergraduate Student Handbook 2012-2013'. The handbook also contains information regarding late submission of coursework.

Module Outline

“Analytic Philosophy” is a (sometimes controversial) term that is commonly used to describe the dominant philosophical tradition in the English-speaking world for much of the 20th century. This module shall introduce students to some of the classic texts from this tradition and explore the philosophical techniques, arguments, and positions that were developed within it.

This module takes a selective approach, introducing both some of the founding figures of the analytic tradition (such as Russell, Wittgenstein and Frege) and some of the most important representatives from its subsequent development (such as Carnap, Ryle, Austin, Quine, Putnam, Davidson). The module covers selected topics at the heart of the debates which have most fundamentally shaped the analytic tradition, such as the following: rule-following, the private language argument, speech-act theory, the sense / reference distinction, the analytic / synthetic distinction, semantic externalism, the indeterminacy of translation, ontological relativity, possible worlds, personal identity, necessity, negation, the limits of thought. The characteristic literary form associated with analytic tradition was the research article (a comparatively short but argumentatively dense essay, often published in a scholarly journal). A typical weekly session in this module will involve close study of one or two such articles, sometimes supported by ancillary materials.

Learning Outcomes

The aims of the course are:

- to develop a familiarity with some of the major figures and themes of analytic philosophy;
- to undertake a close assessment of selected classics from the analytic tradition;
- to foster an understanding of the major founding figures of the analytic tradition and some of its paradigmatic early contribution;

- to gain a precise understanding of at least one major theme or problem in the analytic philosophy of language;
- to gain a precise understanding of at least one major theme in analytic metaphysics;
- to gain familiarity with some of the characteristic techniques of the analytic tradition, including (for example) conceptual and linguistic analysis, ordinary language philosophy, the use of thought experiments;
- to develop the ability to critically analyse writings in the analytic tradition, and to produce argumentatively precise and robust critical analysis.

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- identify major problems, themes and positions developed within the analytic tradition;
- provide critical reconstructions of arguments and disputes associated with the analytic tradition;
- write essays which provide both synopsis and critical assessment of positions and arguments from the analytic tradition;
- explain select central concepts in analytic philosophy of language and metaphysics;
- follow and analyse the characteristically dense form of argumentation used in analytic philosophical writings;
- construct clear argumentative essays analysing arguments and positions in the assigned readings.

READING LIST [The following list is a general reading list. It is not expected that students will read all items on this list. Detailed reading list is provided in the week by week breakdown, below.]

Carnap, Rudolf, “The Old and the New Logic”

Carnap, Rudolf, “The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis”

Russell, Bertrand, “On Denoting”

Frege, Gottlob, “On Sense and Reference”

Frege, Gottlob, “The Thought”

Frege, Gottlob, *Philosophy of Arithmetic*

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations*

Kripke, Saul, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Languages*

Kripke, Saul, *Naming and Necessity*

Austin, J.L., *How to Do Things With Words*

Grice, Paul, “Meaning”

Quine, W.v.O., “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”

Quine, W.v.O., “Ontological Relativity”

Putnam, Hilary, “The Meaning of ‘Meaning’”

Goodman, Nelson, “The New Riddle of Induction”

Davidson, Donald, “Actions, Reasons and Causes”

Davidson, Donald, “On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme”

Burge, Tyler, “Individualism and the Mental”

Dummett, Michael, “On Bringing About the Past”

Lewis, David, *Counterfactuals*

Lewis, David, *On the Plurality of Worlds*

Williams, Bernard “The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality”

FURTHER READING

Dummett, Michael, *On the Origins of Analytical Philosophy*

Week-by-Week Breakdown [Indicative]

Week 16 (18 Jan): Introduction to Early Analytic Philosophy

Reading: Carnap, "The Old and the New Logic"; "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis."

Week 17 (25 Jan): The Analytic-Synthetic Distinction

Reading: Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"

Week 18 (1 Feb): Radical Interpretation and the Inscrutability of Reference

Reading: Quine, "Ontological Relativity"

--first essay due --

Week 19 (8 Feb): Rule-Following I

Reading: Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (§201 *et seq.*); Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Languages* (Chs 1&2: "Introduction" and "The Wittgensteinian Paradox").

Week 20 (15 Feb): Rule-Following II

Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Languages* (Ch. 3: "The Solution and the 'Private Language' Argument").

Week 21: Reading Week - no lecture/class unless notified otherwise by Wayne Martin.

Week 22) (1 Mar): Semantic Externalism I

Reading: Grice, "Meaning"; Putnam, "The Meaning of 'Meaning'"

Week 23 (8 Mar): Semantic Externalism II

Reading: Burge, "Individualism and the Mental"

-- second essay due --

Week 24 (15 Mar): GUEST LECTURE: "Why Kripkenstein is not Wittgenstein"

Reading: Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (§201 *et seq.*)

Week 25 (22 Mar): tba (Wild Card)

Some Possible Readings/Topics:

Goodman, ""The New Riddle of Induction"

Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme"

Davidson, "Knowing One's Own Mind"

Williams, "The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality"

Fodor and Lepore, *Holism: A Shopper's Guide*

Rorty, "Pragmatism, Davidson, and Truth"

Summer Term

Week 31: Revision Session

SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK

The primary method of submission for all Philosophy and Art History coursework is submission to OCS by 12.00 noon on the date stipulated below. Submission for PY430 is to OCS only. Students are not required to submit a hard copy.

Please do not leave submission to OCS until the last minute as there may be delays at peak times. OCS can be reached through your 'myStudy' pages of 'my Essex', or alternatively visit: <https://courses.essex.ac.uk/ocs/>. Help for students, including a 'Quick Start Guide', is available from the OCS web site.

When submitting your watermarked hard copy please make sure it is either stapled or held together by a paper clip with the 'Essay Cover Sheet' on top. Copies of the cover sheet are available from 6.130, or from the School's website at:

http://www.essex.ac.uk/philosophy/restricted/Cover_sheet_for_undergraduates_2012-13.pdf.

No extensions will be granted. **Students who fail to submit their coursework by the stipulated deadline will receive a mark of zero unless they are able to submit a valid claim for late submission.** For details of the University's late submission policy please go to:

http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/students/ug/crswk_pol.htm.

Every year we have a number of students who are found guilty of plagiarism and the penalties can be severe. For a second offence it usually means that the student concerned is asked to withdraw. If you are uncertain about how to reference your work take a look at the following web site:

<http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/students/ug/sources.html> or speak to one of your lecturers.

WORD COUNT: A word count must be displayed at the end of your essay

ESSAY QUESTIONS

First Essay

Deadline: 12.00, Thursday, 7 February, 2013

Return date: 28 February, 2013

Write a short essay, 1,000 – 2,000 words, answering one of the following questions:

1. Can the analytic-synthetic distinction be defended from Quine's attack?
2. "If I can't know what you mean by 'gavagai,' then I can't know what I mean by 'rabbit' either." Do you agree or disagree?
3. Donald Davidson once wrote: "The problem of interpretation is domestic as well as foreign: it surfaces for speakers of the same language in the form of the question, how can it be determined that the language is the same." Explain and assess Davidson's claim, which Rorty famously summed up with the slogan, "Radical interpretation begins at home." Note on sources: I have taken the Davidson quote from a paper called, "Radical Interpretation," *Dialectica* 27 (1973), 313-28; reprinted in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 125-139. The Rorty quote is from "Pragmatism, Davidson, and Truth," reprinted in Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth: Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 126-150.

Second Essay

Deadline: 12.00, Thursday, 14 March, 2013

Return date: 4 April, 2013

Write a short essay, 1,000 – 2,000 words, answering one of the following questions:

1. Assess the success of Kripke's solution to what he calls "the Wittgensteinian paradox."
2. Suppose someone made the following complaint: "We can't hope to learn anything significant about meaning through speculative thought experiments about Twin Earth and Tharthritis. Meaning is an empirical phenomenon and we ought to use the resources of empirical natural science, not armchair speculation, in order to investigate it." Would you agree or disagree?
3. Can the thesis of semantic externalism suffice to refute the thesis that the mind is the brain?

Third (Optional) Essay

Deadline: 12.00, Thursday, 9 May, 2013 **No late coursework will be accepted**

Return date: 24 May, 2013

If you wish to write an optional essay and are eligible to do so, then choose a question (not the one you have already answered) from the list which contains the title of the essay for which you have received the lowest mark.

Feedback will be provided when your coursework is returned. If you would like to discuss the feedback received then please do not hesitate to get in touch with your lecturer or class/seminar teacher in their office hours (as shown on their office doors) or by appointment.